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# Wool Growers Convention

Max S. Baucus

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Indexing Form

Senator \* or Department\*: **BAUCUS**

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Record Type\*: **Speeches & Remarks**

MONTH/YEAR of Records\*: **December-1987**

(Example: JANUARY-2003)

(1) Subject\*: **Agriculture**

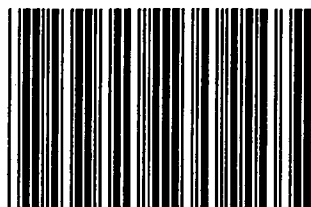
(select subject from controlled vocabulary, if your office has one)

(2) Subject\* **Wool Growers Convention**

DOCUMENT DATE\*: **12/05/1987**

(Example: 01/12/1966)

\* "required information"



BAUCUS

12/5/87  
B. Balls

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MAX BAUCUS  
WOOL GROWERS CONVENTION

Good afternoon, everyone.

I'm very happy to be invited back to speak with you. The best part about working in Washington is coming home to Montana.

Last year your leadership -- Bob Gilbert and others -- asked me for help. Lamb imports, Bob told me, had grown from a steady steam into a crushing flood.

Your livelihood, and the livelihood of an entire American industry, was under siege by massive surges in imported lamb.

Now, I don't think there is anyone in this room who doesn't support competition, who doesn't support fair trade, who isn't willing to work a little harder and smarter to meet foreign competition head on.

But Montana wool growers aren't competing against New Zealand wool growers, they are competing against the New Zealand government;

Montana wool growers aren't competing against Australian wool growers, they are competing against lobbying efforts of the Australian government.

And that just isn't fair.

So you asked for my help on the lamb import problem. And you got it.

The Baucus lamb provision is part of the Senate trade bill. And I'm going to do everything I can to see YOUR lamb provision become law.

There is no reason why lamb should not be treated like other red meats under the Meat Import Act. Period!

A key strategy to start the lamb bill moving worked: as a member of the Senate Finance Committee, which writes trade legislation, I was

able to prevail upon the committee to add the lamb provision to the Senate trade bill.

We didn't get it in the House trade bill, but getting on the Senate bill cleared a major hurdle.

Now, much like your battle against a flood of imports, I have had to battle a flood of lobbying and disinformation against the lamb bill.

As soon as I got the lamb provision in the Senate trade bill our opponents sprang into action.

They have employed almost guerrilla-like tactics.

The Australians, the New Zealanders, with the help of some east coast Senators, have poured money and time into an effort to defeat our lamb bill.

I would guess that every member of Congress has been lobbied to kill the lamb provision.

Our opponents even used a common Washington trick, lobbying through the press. Reporters at the Los Angeles Times and the Wall Street Journal were told by our opponents that I introduced the lamb provision because my family owns a ranch.

Nothing could be further from the truth, and nothing has stiffened my resolve more than the use of mud slinging tactics.

For some reason those big city papers thought it unusual that a Senator for Montana would be concerned about the lamb industry. That kind of supermarket mentality -- where they see the final product in the meat case but don't understand how it got there -- ignores the real needs of the nation's wool growers.

I am on your side...I am fighting for you...we're not going to let New Zealand, Australia, or a bunch of east coast fat cats trample all over the lamb industry!

We've got some arrows in our quiver, too.

The trade bill now goes to a conference committee, where the House and Senate work out differences between the two versions. I am one of the Senators on that conference committee, our chief Senate opponent -- Bill Bradley -- is not.

I will be at the table fighting to keep the lamb provision in the final version.

Thanks to lobbying on our side by yourselves and wool growers across the country, the Administration has softened its opposition to the provision a bit.

They know that we cannot be ignored.

A few months back, when the trade bill was being prepared for conference, I asked for a meeting with Clayton Yeutter -- the Administration's point man on the trade bill.

Clayton asked me to name my top three priorities for the trade bill.

And I did:

(HOLD UP YOUR HAND AND COUNT WITH YOUR FINGERS)

Lamb...

Lamb....

Lamb....

Based upon Clayton's response, I'm hopeful the Administration may have resolved itself to work something out with us to solve the lamb import problem.

We may need to adjust the import numbers in the final bill, but I think we will get a provision that protects U.S. lamb producers from devastating surges in imports.

In short, we are dealing from a position of strength.

And it is my goal to see that the Australians and New Zealanders eat more crow than lamb in the months ahead.



For now, we all just have to keep fighting.

I need to keep pushing my colleagues to support the lamb bill.

Your national organization has got to keep up the lobbying pressure.

And you and your friends in other states have to keep calling individual Members of Congress.

It won't be easy, but believe me, it's worthwhile.

By working together we have come far, despite enormous pressure to kill the lamb provision.

I've enjoyed working with the Wool Growers on this fight, and I think we can win this one for you.

Ironically, I'm leaving here to go to Bozeman to give a big Montana welcome to our chief Senate opponent of the lamb provision.

Senator Bill Bradley is a friend -- a misguided friend -- but still a friend. I intend to take advantage of his presence in Montana to help him realize that our opponents have pulled the wool over his eyes.

I think it is important that we get Bill out of the smog of New Jersey and give him some fresh Montana air to help clear his thinking. I think we can lift the wool out of his eyes and clear his vision.

Again, thank you for your guidance and support of the Baucus lamb provision. We've come a long way, and I intend to be with you for the rest of the fight.